



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/512,142	10/22/2004	Toshio Hosooka	121566	8630
25944	7590	02/16/2006	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			WOOD, ELIZABETH D	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1755	

DATE MAILED: 02/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/512,142	<b>Applicant(s)</b> HOSOOKA, TOSHIO	
	<b>Examiner</b> Elizabeth D. Wood	<b>Art Unit</b> 1755	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE    MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on       .
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s)        is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s)        is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s)        is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s)        are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on        is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No.       .
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. <u>      </u> |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)                     |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/22/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>      </u>  |

### ***Specification***

The examiner has not checked the specification to the extent necessary to determine the presence of **all** possible minor errors (grammatical, typographical and idiomatic). Cooperation of the applicant(s) is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant(s) may become aware of in the specification, in the claims and in any future amendment(s) that applicant(s) may file.

Applicant(s) is also requested to complete the status of any copending applications referred to in the specification by their Attorney Docket Number or Application Serial Number, **if any**.

The status of the parent application(s) and/or any other application(s) cross-referenced to this application, **if any**, should be updated in a timely manner.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claims are indefinite with respect to the terminology "on the basis of extrapolation amount added to a mixture". It is further unclear whether the remaining percentages in the claim depend on the composition with or without water. For the

Art Unit: 1755

purposes of examination, the examiner considers all percentages recited to mean "by weight of the entire material or composition".

Claim 2 further recites "types selected" which is improper. The materials recited are not "types" and this should be deleted. The claim further recites "any of which is in granular form" which does not constitute a proper and required limitation on the selected materials. Granular should precede each member of the Markush group.

Claims 4, 5 and 9-13 recite "a construction method of the civil engineering material" which is confusing. As this appears to be a method for making the composition, the preamble should be so modified.

The claim is further indefinite in the recitation of "loosening the agglomerates of the hardened material" because there is no antecedent basis in the process for either agglomerates or hardened material.

Claims 5 and 11 are further confusing in the language "so as to nurture a plant and/or tree in the formed body" as this is apparently no more than function intended use terminology. If applicants actually intend this to constitute an active limitation on the process, the claim should be amended.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Art Unit: 1755

Claims 1-4 and 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by JP 07-102571.

The Japanese document employs cement, water and aggregate, wherein the aggregate contains **not less than** 50 wt.% powder of 0.1mm or less. All compositional percentages appear identical with the exception being that the instant claims recite 10 to **less than** 50% by weight of powder of 0.1 mm or less. Although this might appear a direct teaching away, it is clear that the reference clearly envisioned the claimed subject matter and the use thereof for environmental remediation as claimed in the instant application. The translation states on page 2 that it is simply for economic reasons. Accordingly, the reference has disclosed the invention as claimed as a non-preferred embodiment, which still anticipates the instant claims.

The instantly claimed mixing and curing steps are adequately taught by the reference, as are the addition of fertilizer and/or components necessary for revegetation.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 1755

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 5-7 and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over claims 1-4 and 8-10 as discussed above.

These claims differ from the JP disclosure in the recitation that the material made is formed into "container-like" bodies and buried.

Absent some convincing evidence to the contrary, the examiner considers this to be a matter of design choice for the skilled artisan. For example, if the artisan intended to grow grass in a given area, a layer of the cementitious material would be selected. If, on the other hand, the artisan intended to grow large trees, then a

Art Unit: 1755

container shape would be ideal. Clearly, such can be considered a result-effective variable to the artisan ordinarily skilled in the area of technology.

The limitations of all claims have been considered and are deemed to be within the purview of the prior art.

### ***Conclusion***

Applicants are advised that any evidence to be provided under 37 CFR 1.131 or 1.132 and any amendments to the claims and specification should be submitted prior to final rejection to be considered timely. It is anticipated that the next office action will be a final rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth D. Wood whose telephone number is 571-272-1377. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 5:30-2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on 571-272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 1755

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth D. Wood", written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth D. Wood  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1755

edw